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Agenda item 60
Strengthening of the United Nations system

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/241

Report of the Secretary-General

Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997, adopted the recommendations of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations system as contained in the annex to the resolution. Implementation of the recommendations was to be effective from 1 January 1998.

2. In paragraph 4 of the resolution, the Secretary-General was requested to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted in response to that request.

3. The annex to resolution 51/241 contains the recommendations of the Open-ended High-level Working Group. Sections I to XIV of the annex deal with the organization and working methods of the General Assembly, and sections XV to XXV deal with the functioning of the Secretariat. This report provides commentary only on those paragraphs that impact on the working methods of the Assembly and the Secretariat and where further elaboration was deemed necessary.

Commentary on the text of the annex to resolution 51/241

II. Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

4. In section II of the annex, on the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, a number of changes to the format, content and release date of the report are requested. Several of the recommendations may need further review especially in relation to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

5. *Paragraphs 3 to 6*. The implementation of paragraph 3 requires that rule 48 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly be revised to read "thirty" instead of "forty-five" days. In preparing his annual report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General will be fully cognizant of the provisions of paragraphs 4 to 6.

6. *Paragraph 7*. The provisions of this paragraph will be taken into account in scheduling items for consideration in plenary meetings and will also be brought to the attention of the President of each session of the General Assembly.

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7. *Paragraph 8.* The provisions of this paragraph are covered by rule 64 of the rules of procedure, which states that proposals to refer any portion of the report of the Secretary-General to one of the Main Committees without debate shall be decided upon by the General Assembly without previous reference to the General Committee.

8. *Paragraph 9.* All efforts will be made to provide the information requested in this paragraph.

9. *Paragraph 10.* At the fifty-second session, the Secretary-General introduced his report on the work of the Organization orally just before the beginning of the general debate. Should this be acceptable, the timing may be maintained in the future.

III. General Assembly consideration of the report of the Security Council

10. *Paragraphs 11 and 13.* The agenda item entitled "Report of the Security Council" will continue to be considered in plenary meetings and will remain open until the closing of the session.

11. *Paragraph 12.* The provisions of this paragraph will be brought to the attention of the President of each session of the General Assembly.

12. *Paragraph 14.* The provisions of this paragraph are already implemented, since the monthly tentative forecast of the programme of work of the Security Council is made available by the Department of Political Affairs in all official languages to all Member States for their information.

IV. General Assembly consideration of the report of the Economic and Social Council

13. *Paragraph 15.* As requested, the provisions of this paragraph will be implemented in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. Note has been taken of the request for an evaluation of the report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, taking into account the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

V. General Assembly consideration of the report of the International Court of Justice

14. *Paragraph 16.* The report of the International Court of Justice has been and will continue to be considered in plenary meetings.

VI to X. Timing of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly; the general debate; time limits; the agenda; and organization of work

15. The recommendations in sections VI to X, which deal with the organization of the General Assembly, have been grouped together.

16. Rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly states that the General Assembly shall meet every year in regular session commencing on the third Tuesday in September. Paragraph 17 of the annex to the resolution calls, *inter alia*, for the regular sessions of the General Assembly to now commence on the first Tuesday following 1 September. Rule 1 of the rules of procedure would need to be amended.

17. In addition, in accordance with rule 2 of the rules of procedure, the General Assembly has, at the beginning of each session, fixed a closing date for the session. In recent years, the closing date has been the Monday before the opening of the next session. Were the General Assembly to retain this practice, the closing date would consistently fall on an official holiday of the Organization, for which financial and other implications may need to be considered. The General Assembly may wish to decide on a closing date for the fifty-second, and for future sessions, that will fall on a working day. The Assembly may wish to consider opening the session on the Wednesday following the first Monday in September and closing the session on the preceding day.

18. *Paragraphs 17, 18, 19 and 30.* The provisions of these paragraphs attempt to set out a schedule for the first four weeks of a regular session. While paragraph 17 stipulates that the General Committee is to meet "as soon as possible" after its election and present its report to the General Assembly "before the commencement of the general debate", and while paragraph 18 states that the General Assembly "shall reconvene in mid-September to consider the report of

the General Committee", paragraph 19 stipulates that the general debate shall begin "in the third week of September", thus creating a conflict in the implementation of paragraphs 18 and 19. In 1998, for example, mid-September falls in the third week of September.

19. Further conflict may arise in view of paragraph 30 which stipulates, *inter alia*, that all Main Committees shall hold brief organizational sessions once the General Assembly has taken decisions on the agenda, before the commencement of the general debate.

20. On the understanding that it is the intention of Member States to allow more time between the opening of the session and the first meeting of the General Committee, and between the meeting of the General Committee and that of the General Assembly to consider the first report of the General Committee, and taking into account the provisions of paragraph 30, Member States may wish to consider amending the provisions of paragraphs 18 and 19 to refer to weeks in the session rather than weeks in September, and indicate that "the General Assembly shall consider the report of the General Committee in the second week of the session" and that "There shall continue to be only one general debate each year, beginning in the third week of the session." Furthermore, the Assembly may wish to specify that the general debate should begin "on the Monday of the third week of the session."

21. At the fifty-third session, after consultations between the President of the General Assembly and Member States, through regional group chairmen and others, the agreed dates for the general debate are from 21 September to 2 October 1998.

22. *Paragraph 20 (a)-(e).* It should be noted that the implementation of paragraph 20 (a) and (e) will translate into afternoon meetings up to an hour and a half longer than at present in the first week, and up to an hour longer than at present in the second week.

23. *Paragraph 22.* Since in plenary meetings the length of statements in debates other than the general debate averages eight minutes, the General Assembly may wish to review the recommendation contained in paragraph 22.

24. *Paragraph 23.* The provisions of this paragraph confirm the present practice. While the rules of procedure make provision for establishing the agenda of each session of the General Assembly and for amending and deleting items on the agenda, there are no specific provisions for the reopening of the consideration of an agenda item. It has been the practice for such requests to be made in writing, in most cases by Member States or the Secretary-General, and issued as documents of the General Assembly. The President of the General Assembly usually consults with Member States prior to scheduling the consideration of the request by the Assembly.

25. *Paragraphs 24 to 27.* Despite some successes in the rationalization and streamlining of its agenda, in particular as concerns the clustering, biennialization, triennialization or even quadrennialization of some agenda items, the General Assembly has not achieved a reduction of its overall workload over the last three sessions. The total number of items on the agenda increased from 164 at the forty-ninth session to 168 at the fifty-first session.

26. The recommendation of the General Assembly that, as a general rule, agenda items that could be considered in the Main Committees should be referred to those Committees rather than to the Assembly in plenary meetings has also met with little success, as the number of items allocated to plenary meetings has increased over the last three sessions. The number of items allocated to each of the Main Committees, with the exception of the Fifth Committee, has decreased or remained fairly stable. The workload of the plenary meetings has further increased because the debates on some of the items allocated to Main Committees have been held in plenary meetings.

27. A detailed examination of these issues is contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/264 on the revitalization of the work of the Assembly (A/52/856).

28. *Paragraph 28.* The provisions of this paragraph will be brought to the attention of the President of each session of the General Assembly.

29. *Paragraph 32.* Although the number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly has decreased slightly, from 328 at the forty-ninth session to 311 at the fifty-first session, there has been no corresponding drop in the number of reports requested of the Secretary-General. The reports requested numbered 283 at the forty-ninth session, 288 at the fiftieth session and 286 at the fifty-first session.

XI. The General Committee

30. *Paragraphs 33 to 35.* The General Committee is guided by rules 40 to 43 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. Member States that are not represented on the General Committee but have requested the inclusion of an item in the agenda have, in accordance with rule 43, been granted permission to participate without a vote in the Committee's discussion of the request. In many instances,

rule 43 has been waived to enable Member States that are neither members of the General Committee nor co-sponsors of requests to participate without a vote in the Committee's discussions. As requested in paragraph 33, the current process of decision-making will continue.

31. The provisions of these paragraphs will be brought to the attention of the President of the General Assembly in his capacity as Chairman of the General Committee.

XII. Subordinate machinery

32. *Paragraph 37.* The First Committee of the General Assembly will consider the request contained in this paragraph at its resumed session early in July 1998.

33. *Paragraph 38.* The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is preparing a document which will also respond to a similar request contained in General Assembly resolution 52/55 of 10 December 1997. The document was submitted to the Secretary-General after it was considered by the Board of Governors of IAEA, which met from 16 to 20 March 1998. An evaluation of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, also requested in the resolution, will be submitted when the report is received by the Agency for comments.

XIV. Role of the President of the General Assembly

34. *Paragraph 44.* A provision of $250,000 per year for the office of the President of the General Assembly was proposed and subsequently approved in the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999. This amount is in addition to those resources already included in the budget for the President during his tenure. Existing resources include a spokesperson, security officers, drivers, two secretaries and hospitality funds.

XV. Technology

35. *Paragraph 45.* A total of 185 permanent missions in New York have been provided with Internet access to United Nations information on line and to documents on the optical disk system (ODS). Twenty-two missions of developing countries have been given hardware and software to facilitate their access. Through a joint effort of the Information Technology Services Division and the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, approximately 1,000 mission staff have been trained on Internet searching, creating home pages, and advanced Web site design. Four computers have been installed in the Delegates' Lounge, and four more will be added shortly, to provide Internet access for delegates. Six computers are available in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library for the use of mission staff. Training will continue to be available. Fifteen computers have been installed in seven conference rooms, with more to be installed as the Secretariat computer replacement programme progresses. Additional computers will be installed in other locations within United Nations premises, as the need arises.

36. As a result of the expansion of mission connectivity, 50 mission home pages are linked to the United Nations home page. The United Nations home page receives an average of 1.4 million hits per week, and approximately 15,000 documents are downloaded from ODS weekly.

XVI. System-wide coordination

37. *Paragraph 47.* The request contained in this paragraph is being pursued in the context of the implementation of the reform programme launched by the Secretary-General in 1997. The strengthening of the overall coherence of the United Nations system is, indeed, one of the underlying themes of that programme. Apart from the measures taken to enhance coordination among the various secretariat structures, the interaction and dialogue between the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the Economic and Social Council has been intensified and placed on a new footing.

38. In 1998, for the first time, the Secretary-General addressed the Economic and Social Council as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and expressed his thoughts on the role of the Committee and the evolution of its work over the past year. The Secretary-General emphasized the unique character of the Committee, not only as the symbol of the unity of purpose of a decentralized, diverse yet united system but also as an instrument to harness the specialized capacities of the various agencies to meet the economic and social objectives of the Charter of the United Nations. The Secretary-General further indicated that an effort is being made to exploit the full potential of the Committee, namely:

(a) As an instrument of leadership for the Secretary-General in bringing to bear the wide-ranging capacities of the system on the overall effort to advance security and development;

(b) As a collective source of advice to intergovernmental bodies and as an instrument for pursuing intergovernmental mandates in a comprehensive way;

(c) As a source of support for individual organizations within the system, in the face of challenges that are beyond the capacity of any one of them.

39. The Secretary-General has given a great deal of personal attention to his responsibilities as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination; to building and strengthening his personal relations with the executive heads of programmes, funds and other bodies of the system and to reinforcing a sense of purpose among them. In turn, the executive heads have shown their commitment to strengthening inter-agency coordination, including by their personal attendance at sessions of the Committee and the substantive contributions of their organizations to the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies. The Bretton Woods institutions have also been fully engaged in this process.

40. Indeed, there has been significant evolution in the executive heads' own perceptions of the role of the Committee and inter-agency coordination. The wide-ranging discussions that have been held in the Committee over the past year have brought to the fore the major strategic and managerial challenges confronting the system as a whole; they have strengthened the realization that the future of each part of the system cannot be separate from that of its other parts; and they have led to a renewed commitment to utilizing the Administrative Committee on Coordination as the privileged forum where the programme and managerial initiatives of the executive heads should be concerted, and their impact on the overall capacity of the system and its future assessed.

41. In this perspective, the Administrative Committee on Coordination, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, began in 1997 to consider an intensive review of the overall direction of reform processes under way within the system with the aim of strengthening inter-agency coordination and achieving greater unity of purpose. The Committee has focused attention on key policy issues such as coordinated follow-up to global conferences, post-conflict peace-building, the system's relationship with civil society, and the changing role of the State and its implications for the functioning of the United Nations system. The Committee's deliberations on these issues were guided by the joint statement on reform adopted by the Committee in November 1996.

42. At its first regular session of 1998, held on 27 and 28 March, the Administrative Committee on Coordination initiated a new phase in which the system as a whole would carry out an in-depth assessment of the impact that the reform processes under way in the various organizations were having on each other and on the coherence and effectiveness of the system as a whole. Such an assessment would include the identification of further measures that need to be taken by the organizations of the system, individually and collectively.

43. Members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination reaffirmed their collective commitment to the renewal of the system as a whole. They emphasized their strong determination to refocus on core competencies, define common priorities and enhance the efficiency and impact of the activities of the system. They expressed their readiness to change and adjust the system to the new realities and the complex challenges of the future.

44. In the next phase, the Administrative Committee on Coordination will continue its efforts to enhance the effectiveness and impact of its work by focusing on a few key policy and strategic issues and promoting a more continuous dialogue among its members, using modern communications and information technologies, including teleconferencing, thus minimizing the need for meetings and travel. The aim will be to bring about greater policy coherence and functional complementarity within the system and enhance the system's flexibility and rapid response capacity to major international developments and crises, thereby increasing its relevance to the priorities and concerns of Member States.

XVII. Oversight and accountability of the Secretariat: external and internal mechanisms

45. *Paragraph 50.* The reporting on programme performance falls within the framework of regulations 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. In response to calls for improvements in the reporting, recent reports have been improved in terms of their coverage and the details provided. The concern of Member States relating to the quantitative and rather descriptive nature of the reporting and the absence of analysis of the results achieved is still being worked on.

46. Two main difficulties have been encountered. The first relates to the fact that the programme budget is conceived and formulated in terms of activities to be undertaken. While

some indicative information on resources at the subprogramme level is provided there is no reference to any expected outcome at the end of the biennium. Second, the concepts of monitoring and evaluation are not being adequately perceived by programme managers as essential management tools for enhancing the economy and efficiency of implementation and assessing the results achieved. Consequently, reporting on programme performance has been consolidated centrally against a limited frame of reference that does not generate enough information to facilitate an overall analysis of performance or an assessment of the achievements.

47. It is clear that improvement in reporting will require adjustments to current managerial practices and the integration of monitoring and evaluation as a management tool within existing oversight mechanisms. Furthermore, a proper system of information of a qualitative and a quantitative nature, to allow analytical assessment of performance and results achieved for oversight purposes, must be established. To this end, and in an effort to gradually transform the monitoring exercise into a performance evaluation function, a set of guidelines on programme monitoring and evaluation was issued in November 1997, under the joint signature of the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services and the Under-Secretary-General for Management. The guidelines aim to help managers shift from a relatively passive emphasis on administrative procedures to a more active concern with client satisfaction and results.

48. Improvement in the presentation and context of reporting on performance depends on the clarity of the objectives and the descriptions of the activities cited in the programme budget, the support of programme managers and their commitment to using the monitoring and evaluation functions as a management tool for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation.

49. In his reform programme the Secretary-General recommended that the General Assembly review the existing arrangements covering the planning, programming and budgetary process in order, *inter alia,* to enhance their role in providing strategic direction; in other words, to shift to results-based budgeting. In its resolution 52/12 B, the General Assembly took note of the recommendation of the Secretary-General and asked for a more detailed report that would include, *inter alia,* a full explanation of the proposed change for consideration before the end of its fifty-second session.

50. *Paragraph 52.* The oversight bodies, namely the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the Board of External Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit have begun a series of regular coordination meetings. For example, the Board of Auditors holds bilateral coordination meetings with the Office of Internal Oversight Services every two months, and with the Joint Inspection Unit, as appropriate. The first tripartite coordination meeting of the Board of Auditors, the Joint Inspection Unit and the Office of Internal Oversight Services was held in 1997. Similar meetings are to be held in 1998. In addition, a joint meeting of the Advisory Committee and the Joint Inspection Unit is to be held at Geneva in 1998.

51. *Paragraph 54.* A report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the strengthening of the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives will be considered by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at the first part of its 1998 session under the item entitled "Programme questions: evaluation". All issues raised in paragraph 54 will be reviewed in that context and, as necessary, by the Fifth Committee later in the year.

XVIII. Areas for more intensive work by oversight machinery

52. *Paragraph 55.* The oversight bodies have given and continue to give attention to most of the areas identified by the Working Group.

53. *Paragraph 55 (a).* The Office of Internal Oversight Services has audited the use of consultants, including special service agreements, on a Secretariat-wide basis and submitted a report to the General Assembly (A/52/814). The Board of Auditors during the biennium 1994-1995 undertook a horizontal review on the subject across all organizations audited by the Board and submitted its findings to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session. In addition, the Joint Inspection Unit is preparing a report on the use of experts and consultants in the United Nations system, which should complement the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

54. *Paragraph 55 (b).* In the 1998 audit plan, the use of consultancies and related arrangements (reimbursable loan agreements) in the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) will be reviewed.

55. *Paragraph 55 (c).* The Office of Internal Oversight Services has conducted a comprehensive management audit of the recruitment process and will be involved, in an

advisory role, in the working group of the Office of Human Resources Management on recruitment, selection and placement of staff. The Board of Auditors plans to review the practice and procedures with respect to short-term contract employment and recruitment in selected organizations. In 1995, the Joint Inspection Unit issued reports on the application of United Nations recruitment, placement and promotion policies (see A/49/845 and A/51/656).

56. *Paragraph 55 (d).* The Board of Auditors conducted a special audit of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) in 1997 and submitted its findings (A/52/755). The Joint Inspection Unit is preparing a report on the use of information systems and information technology in the United Nations system with a view to identifying measures for enhancing the impact, relevance and cost-effectiveness of United Nations system activities through the improved use of new information and communication technologies.

57. *Paragraph 55 (e).* The Office of Internal Oversight Services is of the opinion that appointments at the senior level are not a suitable topic for an internal oversight body and would be more appropriately dealt with by an external oversight body. In this connection, the Joint Inspection Unit has included in its preliminary work programme for 1998-1999 a report on practices and procedures for senior-level appointments and, if approved for the final 1998-1999 work programme, that report will be scheduled for submission to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.

58. *Paragraph 55 (f).* Procurement is an area of continuous and special oversight attention. The Office of Internal Oversight Services submitted a report to the General Assembly on the review of the implementation of procurement reform (A/52/813), which includes a recommendation on a special code of conduct for United Nations officials in procurement-related functions, and proposes certain restrictions on the employment of staff in those functions. The Board of Auditors has undertaken horizontal reviews to assess the effectiveness of internal control procedures for the award of contracts and the economy and efficiency in which procurement is undertaken. The most recent review was undertaken in the biennium 1994-1995. The Joint Inspection Unit has recently submitted its report entitled "The challenge of outsourcing for the United Nations system" (A/52/338). The General Assembly has requested the Secretary-General to submit for consideration at the main part of its fifty-third session a comprehensive report on outsourcing practices, duly taking into account that report and the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

59. *Paragraph 55 (g).* Conflict of interest has been dealt with in an investigations report and further action is now under review by the Office of Legal Affairs.

60. *Paragraph 55 (h).* The Office of Internal Oversight Services continues to audit trust funds of different size and nature and will in 1998 again devote an adequate amount of resources to this area. As part of its validation of the financial statements of United Nations organizations, the Board of Auditors continues to review the practice and procedure in the establishment and use of trust funds. The Board was specifically requested by Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to examine the management of trust funds in the United Nations Environment Programme, and will report its findings to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session.

61. *Paragraph 55 (i).* In view of the advanced stage of the phasing-out by the Secretariat of type II gratis personnel, no further review by the Office of Internal Oversight Services is planned in this area. The Board of Auditors has recently reviewed the practice and procedures with regard to personnel on loan in the context of its audit of the support account for peacekeeping operations. The Board's findings and recommendations have been included in its report on United Nations peacekeeping operations which will be submitted to the General Assembly at its resumed fifty-second session.

XIX. The Secretary-General

62. *Paragraphs 56 to 61.* Although paragraph 60 states that its provisions concerning the process of selection of the Secretary-General are "without prejudice to the prerogatives of the Security Council", the implementation of those provisions nonetheless may raise constitutional issues, since Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council (see also rule 141 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly).

XX. Senior management

63. *Paragraph 65.* The Secretariat continues to strive for equitable geographical distribution and gender parity, with particular emphasis on appointments at the senior management level. The recent appointments of the Deputy Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management reflect this endeavour.

XXI. Heads of programmes, funds and other United Nations bodies

64. *Paragraph 68.* The Secretary-General concurs with the General Assembly's decision that, in approving appointments and extension of terms, uniform terms of office of four years, renewable once, should be introduced for the executive heads of programmes, funds and other bodies of the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

65. *Paragraph 69.* The position of the General Assembly will be brought to the attention of the agencies concerned.

XXII. General staffing issues

66. *Paragraph 70.* The question of core and non-core functions is an integral element of the on-going discussions regarding the ratio of fixed-term to permanent contracts being conducted within the context of the newly established Task Force on Human Resources Management. The Secretary-General has been requested to submit a report on this issue to the General Assembly at its fifty- third session.

67. *Paragraph 72.* Various forms of short-term appointments have been found necessary for the functioning of the Organization (conference servicing staff). However, at the Professional level, recruitment at the P-2 level is exclusively through the competitive examination process.

68. *Paragraph 73.* The Office of Human Resources Management proposed and received approval for substantial increases in the allocation for staff development and training in the programme budgets for the bienniums 1996-1997 and 1998-1999. Investment in staff development and training to provide staff with training and career support, is invaluable in furthering the development of the Organization's substantive and managerial capacity and supporting performance management. The Organization is also working with and providing support to the Staff College in Turin, with a view to utilizing the programmes offered by that institution.

69. *Paragraph 74.* The Office of Human Resources Management continues to identify potential staff through executive recruitment and, at the Junior Professional level, through the use of the competitive examination process. The need to identify highly qualified candidates, while taking into account the geographical distribution of staff and increasing the percentage of women in the Professional category and above, will also be fully considered. The national competitive examinations are conducted specifically in those countries that have been identified as being unrepresented and under-represented in the Secretariat. Historically, the candidates placed on a roster under the national competitive examination are at gender parity (50/50). During the biennium 1998-1999, the Secretariat will conduct approximately 18 national competitive examinations.

70. *Paragraph 75.* The Office of Human Resources Management will continue to develop the quality of its language services and to strengthen the Organization's capacity to take advantage of its diversity by promoting multilingualism.

XXIII. Personnel management

71. *Paragraph 76.* The recruitment, placement and promotion system is being reviewed within the context of the Task Force on Human Resources Management. The Secretary-General may make recommendations on human resources management during the course of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly.

72. *Paragraph 77.* The issue of mobility and planned rotation of staff is also being addressed within the context of the Task Force. It is important to note that any planned rotation of staff among duty stations will have financial implications.

73. *Paragraph 78.* Following the completion of the first cycle of the performance appraisal system (1997), a complete review of the system including its forms and procedures was conducted, including Secretariat-wide staff and management consultations. In the light of feedback received, revised forms and procedures were developed for the cycle commencing in 1998. The latest report on the implementation of the performance appraisal system was issued as document A/C.5/51/55 and Corr.1. The system will be kept under review.

XXIV. Secretariat remuneration

74. *Paragraph 79.* The Secretariat has been requested to prepare a report on a system of performance awards and bonuses in the context of the performance appraisal system, for the fifty-third session of the General Assembly.

XXV. Independence of the Secretariat

75. *Paragraph 83*. The proposed Code of Conduct is under review by the General Assembly during its resumed fifty-second session. The Code includes provisions for financial disclosures by senior officials.

Conclusion

76. The implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/241 is proceeding as mandated. The annex to the resolution, however, contains several provisions which, while they may not necessarily require the amendment of the rules of procedure, nonetheless affect the understanding or application of those rules. In addition, as indicated in the present report, a number of recommendations contained in the annex to the resolution need further review and possible action by Member States.